



**April 27, 2005**

**To: Members, Water Use Efficiency Subcommittee**  
**From: Bennett Brooks, CONCUR**  
**Re: Summary: April 21, 2005, WUE Subcommittee Meeting**  
**Cc: Tom Gohring, Deputy Director for Water Management**

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Below is a brief discussion summary of the Water Use Efficiency (WUE) Subcommittee meeting held April 21, 2005, in Sacramento. This memorandum is divided into five sections: (1) Background; (2) Participation; (3) Meeting Materials; (4) Discussion Summary; and, (5) Next Steps.

## **I. BACKGROUND**

The WUE Subcommittee met April 21, 2005. The main purpose of the meeting was to review and comment on: (1) progress to-date related to Quantifiable Objectives implementation; (2) the draft revised WUE Program Plan; and, (3) updates on several other WUE Program actions and related activities.

## **II. PARTICIPATION**

The following WUE Subcommittee members or designated alternates participated in the meeting: Co-chair Frances Spivy-Weber, Ronnie Cohen, Roberta Borgonovo, Chris Dundon, Conner Everts, Lloyd Fryer, Peter Jacobsen (for Tim Blair), Bill Jacoby, Todd Manley, Mike Wade and Eric Wesselman (for Mary Ann Dickinson). CBDA Agency participants included Manucher Alemi, Baryohay Davidoff and Dave Todd with DWR, Lucille Billingsley with USBR, Matt Reeve with CDFA, Luana Kiger with NRCS and Rich Mills with the SWRCB. Authority staff and consultants in attendance included Deputy Director Tom Gohring, Mark Roberson, Steve Hatchett, Greg Young and Bennett Brooks. Several members of the public also attended the meeting.

### III. MEETING MATERIALS

The following meeting materials were developed and distributed to support the WUE Subcommittee's deliberations:

- Agenda/Discussion Notes
- Attachment 1: Progress To-Date Quantifiable Objectives' Implementation
- Attachment 2: Draft Revised WUE Program Plan
- Handout: DWR QO Related Activities
- Handout: NRCS News Release
- Handout: Power Point on Common Assumptions
- Updated Subcommittee Roster
- Key Outcomes Memorandum for February 23, 2005, WUE Subcommittee Meeting

Materials will, as appropriate, be updated and posted on the CALFED web page.

### IV. DISCUSSION SUMMARY

#### A. *Quantifiable Objectives*

The WUE Subcommittee spent the bulk of the meeting reviewing progress to-date on Quantifiable Objectives (QO) implementation and developing possible strategies for moving forward.

The discussion began with an overview by CBDA and implementing agencies. The overview generated several key points:

- 55 of the 196 quantifiable objectives are defined. Of those not yet defined, staff projects that another 50 to 75 or so could be quantified in the near future. The remainder is unable to be quantified to data limitations.
- The Water Use Efficiency Proposal Solicitation Packages (PSPs) are generating interest and activity in QOs, but the responses to-date are patchy by activity type, region, and monitoring and verification.
- Department of Water Resources' QO-related activity has focused primarily on PSP rounds and project oversight. With its latest PSP, DWR expects to put additional effort into monitoring and verification. Given resource and staff expertise constraints, DWR doesn't believe it is positioned to serve as the lead entity in articulating new QOs.
- The Bureau of Reclamation has integrated QOs into its standard and regional criteria. Sacramento Valley's regional plan is due out in June and is expected to include extensive linkages with QOs. The Bureau also has funded several early implementation projects intended to facilitate QO implementation.
- The Agricultural Water Management Council works with water districts to help them integrate QOs into the Councils' efficient water management practices process.

Though the process can be time-consuming, the Council believes its efforts are proving effective.

- The CBDA sees itself in an oversight and coordination role as it relates to QO implementation. While CBDA staff and consultants are able to assist an implementation partner in articulating new QOs, it has neither the staff nor the resources nor the mandate to be the lead implementer.

The presentations triggered an extensive discussion among Subcommittee members on the pros and cons of continuing to emphasize QOs and implementation alternatives. Discussion themes centered on several primary topics:

- ***What agency is responsible for articulating QOs?*** Meeting participants expressed mixed views on this topic. Some Subcommittee members felt BDA staff was best positioned to continue articulating new QOs. For those individuals, BDA staff and consultants were seen to have the necessary expertise given their earlier work on QO articulation. Moreover, the work was seen by some as consistent with BDA's oversight and coordination function. Others saw DWR as the more appropriate lead agency, given its role as a CALFED implementation partner, its availability of staff and unallocated technical assistance resources, and its (according to several speakers) earlier commitment to undertake this task. Additionally, the State Board and NRCS, while not seen as lead agencies, were seen as having important resources and perspectives to contribute. All participants agreed that this issue is critical to resolve in the near-term.
- ***Is it necessary to pursue QOs?*** Subcommittee members voiced a range of views regarding the importance of articulating new QOs. A number of speakers described the continued pursuit of QOs as pivotal. Most critically, they said, QOs serve as the broadly supported mechanism for measuring agricultural WUE progress and assessing the need for any future shifts in implementation direction. Without QOs, they said, agricultural and environmental interests run the risk of rehashing old battles over agricultural conservation practices and effectiveness. Moreover, these participants said, the work done to-date enables the fairly straightforward calculation of new QOs. Others said they see QO as beneficial, but not essential to program success. These Subcommittee members noted that districts can and do pursue Targeted Benefits, even if there is no articulated QOs. Additionally, given agencies' limited resources, the effort needed to articulate new QOs and competing priorities, they said, staff time is better focused on fostering districts' pursuit of existing QOs and project management tasks such as verification and monitoring.
- ***What resources does it take to develop new QOs and are they available or is new funding needed?*** This topic, while briefly engaged, was not resolved during the Subcommittee meeting. BDA staff and consultants said many QOs could likely be articulated in a fairly rote manner and without significant resources. DWR expressed concern that it may take more time and expertise than they have available. Subcommittee members agreed that further discussion is needed to identify the needed resources and funding sources.

Based on the discussion, CBDA staff and consultants stepped out the following preliminary conclusions and next steps:

- The CALFED Program should encourage pursuit of Targeted Benefits since: (1) they contribute directly to CALFED objectives; and, (2) Targeted Benefits will likely remain an important part of the Ag WUE landscape, since – as noted earlier – data limitations will make it difficult to craft QOs for a significant number of Targeted Benefits.
- The CALFED Program should continue moving forward with QOs in a realistic, resource-constrained manner. This is seen as particularly important in the near-term since QO implementation serves as the foundation for assessing the effectiveness of the Agricultural Water Use Efficiency Program.
- CALFED Program implementation partners should take the following next steps to further discussions on this topic:
  - Convene a Work Group to (1) identify a subset of QOs important to articulate in the near-term (next one to two years); and then (2) develop an implementation that includes identifying a lead agency and determining funding sources and needs. Work Group members are to include: M. Alemi, B. Davidoff, T. Manley, L. Billingsley, M. Wade, R. Mills, L. Fryer, R. Cohen, L. Kiger, M. Roberson and T. Gohring.
  - Convene a Work Group to look at strategies for tracking performance measures tied to Targeted Benefits. This step is seen as important since there needs to be some method of tracking Ag WUE progress on those Targeted Benefits unable to be quantified in the near future. Work Group members are to include: M. Alemi, T. Manley, L. Billingsley, M. Wade, R. Mills, , R. Cohen, L. Kiger, M. Roberson and T. Gohring.

## ***B. Water Use Efficiency Program Plan***

The Subcommittee reviewed and commented on the updated version of the draft Water Use Efficiency Program Plan. Below is a brief summary of Subcommittee members' comments.

- **Measurement.** Revise Water Measurement task on Page 28 to step out specific non-legislative tasks and identify agency leads. Specific tasks mentioned to include are: groundwater net usage characterization; use of remote sensing for crop water consumption; research and adaptive management programs (with particular interest on a farm-gate delivery study).
- **Urban Certification.** Need consistent statement on action expected on urban certification in the coming year. Reconcile currently inconsistent urban certification language included on Pages 17 and 28. Based on brief discussion that followed, it appears most appropriate to include language such as: "Agencies will be meeting with affected stakeholder communities to determine next steps forward."

- **Introduction.** Include upfront introduction that provides context for the general reader by making clear the following points: (1) WUE projects in California are implemented at the local/regional level; (2) those local/regional projects will be included in water management planning documents and may be subject to local implementation constraints; and, (3) the Program Plan includes ways State and Federal agencies can assist local/regional agencies in overcoming implementation constraints.

Subcommittee members are to submit any additional comments on the draft WUE Program Plan to M. Alemi by Friday, April 29.

#### ***D. Updates***

The meeting included updates on several topics.

- **Common Assumptions.** Greg Young provided an update on the Common Assumptions effort. WUE-specific points in his presentation included: (1) revised WUE projections can be incorporated into the Common Assumptions modeling as part of the Plan Formulation Report (due out in October 2005) and in the Feasibility Study Report (due out in January 2007); and, (2) any stakeholder interested in better understanding the modeling effort can participate in the Ad Hoc Technical Stakeholder Work Group. Subcommittee members expressed strong interest in a follow-on discussion that provides information and seeks feedback on the underlying assumptions related to water use efficiency.
- **Urban Conservation Figures in Bulletin 160.** F. Spivy-Weber expressed concern that the soon-to-be-released draft Bulletin 160 includes agricultural, but not urban, water conservation figures developed through the ongoing WUE Comprehensive Evaluation effort. Staff is to provide the latest urban figures to WUE Subcommittee members and DWR staff to facilitate inclusion of the urban figures in the final version of Bulletin 160.
- **Legislative Discussions.** T. Gohring mentioned that SB 866, the appropriate water measurement legislation introduced by Senator Kehoe and sponsored by CBDA, now looks like it will not be acted upon this calendar year due to legislative concerns regarding the broader CALFED finance package. The bill is to be carried over for possible action in January 2006. B. Jacoby mentioned that SB 8371 (Water Recycling Task Force) legislation has cleared one committee and appears to be moving forward.
- **Comprehensive Evaluation.** Staff and consultants are continuing work on the agricultural and urban portions of the Year 4 WUE Comprehensive Evaluation. A draft may be ready for distribution as early as next month; the final is expected in August.
- **Proposal Solicitation Packages.** Manucher Alemi with DWR informed Subcommittee members that the Water Use Efficiency PSP funding recommendations are moving forward and are expected to be forwarded to BDA for its review during the June 8-9 meeting.

### ***E. Public Comment***

Public comments were incorporated into the discussions above. There were no additional public comments.

## **V. NEXT STEPS**

Based on the discussions, participants agreed to a series of next steps as follows:

- **WUE Subcommittee Meeting Schedule.** The next WUE Subcommittee meeting is to be held June 2, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The meeting is to be held in Sacramento (likely in the CUWCC-CUWA joint boardroom). The exact location will be provided prior to the meeting. Additionally, interested WUE Subcommittee members have been invited to participate in the May 11 Water Supply Subcommittee meeting, where there will be an in-depth discussion of Common Assumptions. The exact time and location of the meeting will be provided later.
- **WUE Program Plan Comments.** Subcommittee members are to forward any additional comments on the draft revised WUE Program Plan to Manucher Alemi (malemi@water.ca.gov) no later than Friday, April 29.
- **Common Assumptions.** Staff is to work with Common Assumptions staff to ensure that all WUE Subcommittee members are invited to attend future meetings of the Common Assumptions Ad-Hoc Stakeholder Group Review.
- **Comprehensive Evaluation.** Staff will strive to distribute to WUE Subcommittee members by mid-May the most recent urban numbers from the Comprehensive Evaluation. This is in response to Subcommittee member's interest in commenting on the draft Bulletin 160 to be released in June.
- **Quantifiable Objectives.** Two work groups are to be formed to continue discussions related to Quantifiable Objectives implementation. The first work group, consisting of M. Alemi, B. Davidoff, T. Manley, L. Billingsley, M. Wade, R. Mills, L. Fryer, R. Cohen, L. Kiger, M. Roberson and T. Gohring, is to focus on prioritizing QOs to be articulated and identifying the funding need and sources. The second work group, consisting of M. Alemi, T. Manley, L. Billingsley, M. Wade, R. Mills, , R. Cohen, L. Kiger, M. Roberson and T. Gohring, is to focus on identifying possible Targeted Benefits-related performance measures. A separate email will be distributed to Work Team participants to arrange follow-on meetings.

Comments or questions regarding the Water Use Efficiency should be directed to Tom Gohring at 916-445-0936.